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April 26, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I was pleased to learn of your plan for a second visit to Utah as Secretary of the Interior. I appreciate our recent phone conversation where you assured me you would not move forward unilaterally to recommend new monuments in Utah under the Antiquities Act. It was the kind of assurance the public in Utah needed, and I appreciate your delivering it.

You will recall that leading up to your previous visit, I wrote you an open letter warning you to avoid seven pitfalls past secretaries have made. Among them was a warning to not "ignore the views of County Commissioners from public land counties." It is my urgent hope that you will use your time in Utah to seek out and listen carefully to these local elected officials. I can assure you that by sincerely seeking to address their concerns, you can begin to repair the obvious rift developing between the Department of the Interior and people living in the Intermountain West.

There were six other pitfalls I listed in my previous letter, a copy of which I have enclosed. Based on decisions coming out of your office related to energy production on federal lands, I think it is worth a second attempt to bring them to your attention.

An article in the Deseret News yesterday highlighted the strong feelings of the energy industry and Utah citizens engaged on federal lands in the West. An industry representative was quoted stating that at the Interior Department, "There's this view that the industry has had unfettered access and is running wild out here with little or no regulation." The article shed some light on the contrast between the extreme level of dissatisfaction among Utah's industry members and the praise

from one of Utah's most extreme environmental groups, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), for your "balanced approach to energy development." Winning such praise from a group like SUWA is a certain bet that your approach is far from balanced.

I have also enclosed a report of a recent survey released yesterday among the industry members of the Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS). Here are some of the results of the industry survey:

Respondents said that in the absence of federal constraints, they would be investing an additional \$2.8 billion in the Rockies.

73% of the respondents have shifted investment from federal to private lands within the Rockies, with more than \$708 million redirected in 2010. This reduces the return to the American taxpayer for energy resources owned by all Americans and drains federal minerals from adjacent state and private lands.

71% of respondents state that dissatisfaction with the federal permitting process is the central aspect driving investment out of the region.

89% of respondents state that their company will continue to divert investment from the Rockies until there are changes in the regulatory process.

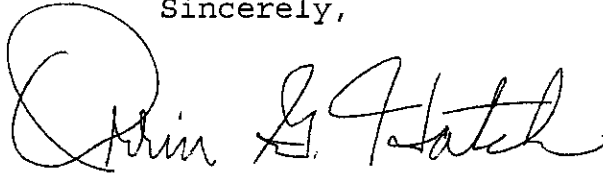
Those are only a few of the very troubling findings of this industry survey. Not only are new government policy shifts killing some of the best jobs in the West, but they are leading to a very significant loss of federal and state revenue from foregone federal energy leases.

I strongly urge you to take a second look at my previous recommendations to you and to read carefully this industry survey. Please take the time to count up the dollar amounts that will be lost to our federal budget by forcing current energy activity off of our federal lands. Please take the time to measure the harm to President Obama's administration as citizens in the West feel increasingly disenfranchised by their federal government.

It falls upon your shoulders to work to reverse the trend toward severe dissatisfaction among the industries our nation depends upon for its energy needs, and to help restore jobs to

the rural West which have disappeared at a rate that cannot be explained away by simply pointing to general economic trends. As always, I stand ready to assist you in an effort to restore real balance to the management of public lands in the West.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Orrin G. Hatch". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator

Enclosures
OGH:jjb